

COBBLE CREEK NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING NOTES - AUGUST 19, 2009



On August 19, 2009 the City of Auburn Mayor and City staff met with neighbors of the Cobble Creek Neighborhood at the end of SE 301st Street, to discuss neighborhood concerns.

Staff in Attendance: MAYOR PETE LEWIS, COMMUNITY SERVICES MANAGER DUANNA RICHARDS, COMMUNITY SERVICES PROJECT ASSISTANT KIRSTEN REYNOLDS, ASSISTANT POLICE CHIEF LARRY MILLER, TRANSPORTATION PLANNER CHRIS HANKINS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS MANAGER SARAH MILLER

Community Members in Attendance: ANNE & RON BENGELINK, BARB & HARRY HABALE, BOB & SANDY NACHLINGER, CARL & DEBBIE BARNER, CHRIS & ERIN EDWARDS, DOUG & NELL DONOVAN, DUSTIN & TRACI WEBER, GENE & JACKIE GOETTING, JOE & NAN NESSEL, KAREL & PAVLINA TRUBAC, KEVIN & DEBBIE DONOVAN, MARILYN & STEVE MALNACK, MARK & SHERRIE CONWAY, PATTY & MONTE ECKELMAN, PATTY & TERRY OSTHUS, PAULA SMITH, PHYLLIS & JIM VANDENBERG AND ROSS & KAM CHAMBERLAIN

Announcements

Mayor Pete Lewis welcomed everyone, thanked them for attending and asked City staff to introduce themselves. The Mayor then indicated the primary purpose of the meeting was for the City to listen to the residents' concerns, consider solutions, respond to questions they could answer immediately and identify items for follow up. The City takes notes of the meeting, which are then sent out to the attendees.

- ***Mayor's Update*** -- residents were encouraged to sign up for the Mayor's Update, an e-newsletter Mayor Lewis sends out every Friday about what's taken place in the City during the week, upcoming events, etc. He also uses the listserv to send out alerts about road closures, emergencies, etc. as a way to keep the community informed. Since this is a listserv, if you decide you don't want to continue receiving it you can unsubscribe at any time.

General Questions/Comments

- ***Why is there a water shortage?***
This summer the City was asking residents to limit water use to early morning and late evening because of potential rate increases for Auburn residents. In hot weather people increase their use of water consumption, which in turn means the City of Auburn has to buy water from Tacoma water; rates are based off the highest water consumption periods. Auburn was trying to make sure water bills stay lower for the taxpayers.

Public Safety Related Questions/Comments

- ***How has the crime been in the neighborhood?***
Assistant Police Chief Larry Miller explained in the last 18 months there were three burglaries, four thefts and a couple vandalisms that occurred. The Cobble Creek HOA Board President mentioned their concern that past community garage sales could have provoked theft and burglaries; the community garage sale has been permanently canceled.
- ***Online Crime Mapping***
You can now utilize the City's website to map crime happening in your neighborhood. The City launched an online crime mapping tool that allows citizens to view reported criminal activity throughout the city with near real-time data. The service is provided by

CrimeReports.com and is free to the public. Using this website, citizens can get easy-to-read incident crime maps from data that is uploaded directly from the Auburn Police Department's activity reports. Crime incident data typically includes: Incident type, date, location, distance from citizen's address, event identification/case number, and/or brief crime incident description. The reported location of registered sex offenders will also be provided on the map.

Citizens can also sign up to receive automatic daily, weekly or monthly email alerts if/when crimes occur near their home, office, local school, etc. and tools such as filters and analytics will allow citizens to search for specific crimes in their area, or to view trends via charts and graphs.

CrimeReports.com can be accessed via the City's website (www.auburnwa.gov/crimereports). This enhancement, coupled with the already existing online police reporting service that was launched in 2007 allowing citizens to file non-emergency reports, is one more way that the City is using technology to increase public safety and awareness. For more information on these services, contact the City of Auburn Police Department at (253) 931-3080.

- ***How can we increase safety in our neighborhood?***

Assistant Police Chief Miller spoke about the Block Watch program. It's proven that areas that have Block Watch groups will see lower crime rates. This neighborhood only has one way in and one way out which works really well. There are 104 officers currently employed by the City but they can't be everywhere at one time, which is why Block Watch really helps. Officers are assigned to a district for a couple years so they can get to know the neighborhood and make a difference in the area.

Block Watch is built on the concept of neighbors watching out for each other because you know better than anyone else who belongs in your neighborhood and who doesn't. If you think "maybe I should call 9-1-1 about this," you should. Residents were encouraged to set up a Block Watch. Once the group is formed, Community Programs Officer Andy Gould will come out to do the formal training on what to watch for, how to react and how to get neighborhood participation. Groups are encouraged to get together several times a year to maintain an active group.

- ***If you have a problem or see anything suspicious call 9-1-1!***

Residents were encouraged to report everything to 9-1-1. The citizens of Auburn own the 9-1-1 system. You should call 9-1-1 whenever you have an emergency, feel something suspicious is going on, need to speak with an officer or file a report (online reporting is also available www.auburnwa.gov/Emergency/Police/Citizen_Online_Police_Reporting.asp if you would prefer to file your report that way). **PLEASE NOTE:** If calling from a cell phone you need to ask for an "Auburn Call Receiver."

Auburn shares ownership of the 9-1-1 system with other South King County cities and the calls go to a dispatch center so residents shouldn't worry about tying up the phone line when making non-emergency calls. When you call 9-1-1 it will be answered by a "Call Receiver." The Call Receiver will determine whether or not your call is an emergency to be handled right away or to have an officer make contact with you to file a non-emergency report. They will ask questions which are specifically designed to obtain information so that the proper response can be made for your call.

If you want to know what the officer finds out be sure to let the Call Receiver know you DO want to be contacted by the officer when they've completed their investigation.

In addition to emergency issues, residents should also call 9-1-1 for non-emergency issues such as street lights out, stop lights out, missing stop signs, fireworks, loose dogs, sewer backups, water leaks, etc. An alternative is to report them via the City website. The link is under Online Services at the top of the page and is called Online Citizen Report (half way down): www.auburnwa.gov/Business/public_works/Online_Citizen_Report.asp.

- ***Can residents volunteer with the Auburn Police Department?***

Auburn has one of the largest police volunteer groups in the State of Washington. Volunteer officers do a lot of work around the city, i.e. security at the airport and, when requested by homeowners, they will check on a house when you're out of town. The Citizen's Academy is a free, 11-week comprehensive program designed to introduce the public to the Auburn Police Department. The program includes patrol, investigations, narcotics, K-9 and a host of other police operations topics. This program will include a tour of the police dispatch center and the Police Academy. The Citizens Academy is open to any Auburn citizen 18 years or older. Applications are available at the Auburn Justice Center and at www.auburnwa.gov/Emergency/Police/How_to_Get_Involved.asp. Business office hours are: Monday-Friday 8 a.m. – 5 p.m., Saturday 9 a.m. – 1 p.m., closed Sundays and Holidays. Or you may call (253) 288-3147, leave your name and phone number, and someone from the Police Department will return your call and answer questions.

- ***How can I be prepared for emergencies?***

Emergency Preparedness Manager Sarah Miller gave a brief presentation regarding programs citizens can participate in to prepare their homes, families and neighborhoods in case of disaster. The Emergency Preparedness Division offers Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training; it is an eight week hands-on practice in such topics as first aid, triage and survival skills. Another program discussed was Map Your Neighborhood, which is now being combined with the Block Watch training. Neighbors are taught how to get organized before a disaster happens. Generalized disaster preparedness training is also available to interested community groups and organizations. To schedule any of these classes for your neighborhood, contact their office at (253) 876-1925 or e-mail emergencyprep@auburnwa.gov; you can also visit their website to see a training schedule: <http://www.auburnwa.gov/disaster>.

- ***Emergency Preparation on potential flooding***

The Army Corps of Engineers has notified the City of Auburn of a situation at the Howard Hanson Dam which may require the release of more water than usual during extreme rain events. As a result of this increased water release, parts of Auburn are at a higher risk of flooding. The general location of this higher risk is confined to the area of Auburn north of 22nd St. NE and those areas immediately bordering the Green River and Mill Creek. This situation may continue for the next 18-24 months or potentially longer depending on the nature of the repair work to be completed at the dam.

It is important to note the Army Corps assures us there is no risk of the dam failing. Renters, homeowners, and businesses are advised to review their insurance policies to ensure they are covered for flooding, sewer backup, landslides, sinkholes, and other issues commonly associated with significant rain events.

The good news is that due to preventive efforts by the Army Corps, King County and the four Green River Valley cities that would be affected by potential flooding, the chance of flooding at the Auburn gauge has been reduced from a 1 in 4 probability to 1 in 33. While it

is not time to relax, it does give us a degree of hope that all of the hard work on the grout curtain and levees we've been doing will indeed make a difference.

The City is continuing our work to inform and protect. The sandbagging lots are open and training is being conducted for levee walkers to check the levees this winter. We will continue to hold meetings and work with populations in need. We will always have updated information on the City's website, in the Mayor's Update, the City's Emergency Radio Station AM 1700, on TV21, the Auburn Alert (reverse 911) system and in the **Auburn Reporter**. We do prepare for the worst and work for the best, and our pledge to you is that as soon as we have the information so will you. Sign up for Auburn Alert, our reverse 9-1-1 system, and email alerts; have a battery powered radio available so you can stay informed. Go to: <http://www.auburnwa.gov/emergency/disaster.asp>, click on Green River and Howard Hanson Dam Information.

- ***Does the City recommend getting flood insurance?***

Yes, we recommend flood insurance even if you're outside of the flood plain. All policies are exactly the same no matter which insurance company you use. If you are in a low risk flood zone the cap is \$388 a year. Flood maps were handed out at the meeting that had helpful information including where to get flood insurance.

Streets/Sewer/Traffic Related Questions/Comments

- ***When will the road adjacent to the golf course be fixed?***

The road has been patched but it's in need of a permanent fix. This road is on the schedule to be replaced under the Save Our Streets (SOS) program; with the chance of flooding the City has decided to wait until the possibility of flooding is no more.

- ***Will the S curve located on 304th Way be removed?***

A developer had planned to remove the curve, but there has been no movement from the developer because of financial hardships. Residents asked if a mirror could be installed on 304th Way, downhill of the entrance to Cobble Creek, to increase traffic safety. Public Works staff will review this issue and make a recommendation.

- ***Can a stop sign be installed near the entrance of the neighborhood?***

Residents want a stop sign installed on SE 302nd Street where it intersects with 104th Ave SE; it is a blind intersection. Public Works staff will review this issue.

Development/Planning Related Questions/Comments

- ***Will the City be taking over King County parks?***

The City of Auburn took over King County's closed parks within the annexation area before the annexation even took place. The City's Parks Department has been maintaining them.

Summary of Solutions Discussed/Action Items

- 1) Can a mirror be installed on 304th Way, downhill of the entrance to Cobble Creek to increase traffic safety? Staff will review and move forward accordingly.
- 2) Residents want a stop sign installed at on SE 302nd Street where it intersects with 104th Ave SE because it is a blind intersection. Staff will review and have a recommendation.

Community Services Team Contact Information:

- Duanna Richards, Community Services Manager, (253) 931-3099, or drichards@auburnwa.gov
- Kirsten Reynolds, Community Services Project Assistant, (253) 876-1964, or kreynolds@auburnwa.gov